

中国地质大学学术著作出版基金资助

Guide to Communication: Effective Writing and Speaking

Xu Feng



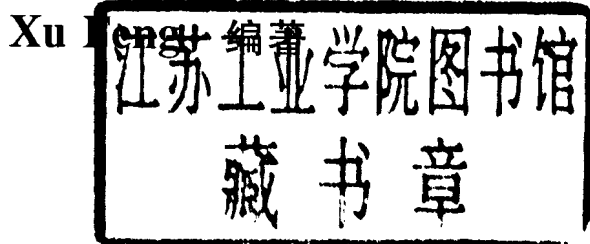
中国地质大学出版社

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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

Guide to Communication: Effective Writing and Speaking/
Xu Feng编著. —武汉:中国地质大学出版社, 2009. 7

ISBN 978 - 7 - 5625 - 2349 - 9

I. Cuide...

II. Xu...

III. 英语-口语

IV. H319. 9

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2009)第 128045 号

Guide to Communication: Effective Writing and Speaking **Xu Feng 编著**

责任编辑:段连秀

策划编辑:段连秀

责任校对:林 泉

出版发行:中国地质大学出版社(武汉市洪山区鲁磨路 388 号) 邮政编码:430074

电 话:(027)67883511

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E-mail: cbb @ cug. edu. cn

经 销:全国新华书店

<http://www.cugp.cn>

开本:880 毫米×1230 毫米 1/32

字数:442 千字 印张:8.5

版次:2009 年 5 月第 1 版

印次:2009 年 5 月第 1 次印刷

印刷:武汉理工大印刷厂

印数:1—2 000 册

ISBN 978 - 7 - 5625 - 2349 - 9

定价:20.00 元

如有印装质量问题请与印刷厂联系调换

前 言

随着经济全球化进程的加快和科学技术突飞猛进的发展,培养具有国际竞争能力、全面发展、高素质的人才成为时代的需求。英语是国际上普遍采用的交际语言,熟练使用英语是国际化人才的基本素质。与此同时,随着我国现代化建设的需要,随着改革开放的深入发展,我国人民同世界各国的交往日益频繁,英语交际能力在对外交流中的作用显得越来越重要。

为适应我国高等教育新的发展形势,深化教学改革,提高教学质量,满足新时期国家对人才培养的需要,2007年9月教育部在试点的基础上正式颁布《大学英语课程教学要求》。《教学要求》规定,大学英语课程的教学目标是:培养学生的英语综合应用能力,特别是听说能力,使他们在今后工作和社会交往中能用英语有效地进行口头和书面的信息交流。因此,提高英语交际能力既是时代的需要,也是众多英语学习者梦寐以求的目标。

在多年的教学实践中发现,中国大学生的英文写作和口语交流存在着很多问题。造成中国学生英文写作和口头困难的原因,除语言基础知识不扎实外,母语的汉语思维方

式的影响,缺乏系统的技巧训练也是造成许多中国大学生英文写作与口头交际困难的重要因素。

针对这些问题,本着理论联系实际的原则,本书就中国大学生在学习和将来工作中需要提高的书面和口头交际能力方面的实际需要,对英语交际的基本理论进行了论述,从书面写作中涉及的基本问题,到书信写作、雅思、出国留学等具体问题;口头交际中的学术演讲、求职面试等都做了详细的讲解。选用的例句、范文和素材大都源自英美最新出版的书籍和刊物。内容新颖、重点突出、实例生动、语言地道、涉及面广、时代感强。力求注重时代性和实用性,提高学习者的英语实际交际应用能力。

内容的编排得到了澳大利亚塔斯马尼亚大学 Barbara Hatley 教授、Ms. Yanjun Wang 和纽卡斯尔大学 Shawn Li 博士的宝贵建议;同时,也得到了中国地质大学(武汉)学术著作出版基金的资助,编辑段连秀女士对本书的编排提出很多宝贵建议,在此一并表示衷心的感谢。

由于作者水平有限,难免有错误和疏漏之处,恳请广大读者批评指正。

编 者

2009 年 2 月

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Chapter 1 Communication Theories

Communication is required of everyone. We cannot survive as isolated individuals, and we would not want to if we could. A normal desire and genuine need is to share joys, successes, failures, and frustrations. Communication is the process of sharing our ideas, thoughts, and feelings with other people and having those ideas, thoughts, and feelings understood by the people we are talking with.

Communication is any behavior, verbal or nonverbal, that is perceived by another. Knowledge, feeling or thoughts are encoded and sent from at least one person and received and decoded by another. Meaning is given to this message as the receiver interprets the message. A connection is made between the people communicating. The way we communicate is a learned style. As children we learn from watching our parents and other adults communicate. As an adult we can learn to improve the way we communicate by observing others who communicate effectively, learning new skills, and practicing those skills.

The ability to effectively communicate at work, home, and in life is probably one of the most important sets of a person's needs. What would our life and world be like without communication? We cannot get along without it. It is also not easy, and we all have probably had experiences where our communication failed or ran

into a barrier. So, if we can understand the communication process better and improve it, we will become a more effective and successful communicator.

The Purposes of Communication

We all use communication for five basic purposes: (1) to establish and build goodwill, (2) to persuade, (3) to obtain or share information, (4) to establish personal effectiveness, and (5) to build self-esteem.

To Establish and Build Goodwill

Your ability to establish and build relationships affects every aspect of your life. Whether in your social, academic, or professional life, this ability determines the depth of your relationships with your friends, loved ones, family, classmates, and coworkers. Good relationships result in goodwill—the favorable reputation that an individual or a business has with its customers. Any communication that helps to develop a better relationship between you and your receiver builds goodwill.

To Persuade

Motivating or persuading others to act in a certain way depends on your ability to convince them that they will benefit from such an action. When others—whether social friends or family, classmates or teachers or supervisors or co-workers—feel that you

are sincerely concerned about them personally, your relationship becomes more valued.

To Obtain or Share Information

Information is one of the most valuable resources we have. You must communicate to obtain the information you need and to share the information you have. You need this valuable resource to function successfully with friends, at school and at work.

To Establish Personal Effectiveness

When you receive a message that is accurate easy to understand, and error – free, you form a positive image of the sender. If you receive a message full of errors, you suspect that the sender is careless or thoughtless. Thus, whether in a social, academic, or professional setting, a positive image is very important.

To Build Self – esteem

Positive comments or reactions from others increase your self – esteem. Such positive reinforcement causes you to feel good about yourself and your chances for success. This confidence has a positive impact on your social relationships, your academic associates, and your co – workers. In summary, you spend a great deal of time communicating. How you communicate critically impacts your social, academic, and professional lives.

Forms of Communication

Rapoport (1950) argues that “Experience cannot be transmitted as experience—it must first be translated into something else. It is this something else which is transmitted. When it is received it is translated back into something that resembles experience.” Communication is an ongoing process by which people represent their feelings, ideas, values and perceptions with symbols. These symbols are in the form of:

- 1) verbal communication, either spoken or written
- 2) nonverbal
- 3) graphic.

Verbal Communication

Verbal communication can be in the form of spoken words between two or more people or written words in written communication.

Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal communication is that communication sent by any means other than words or graphics. Nonverbal components exist in oral, written and graphic communication or independently of words, in face – to – face contact.

Graphic Communication

Graphic communication represents ideas. Relationships or connections visually with shapes, diagrams and lines. Graphic communication can have both verbal and nonverbal components—for examples, some of the “No Smoking” signs displayed in public places.

Communication skills in spoken, written, nonverbal and graphic communication are all used in the workplace. These forms of communication send messages through a number of different channels. In this book, attention is mainly focused on verbal communication—written and oral, communication in study and at work.

Types of Communication

Taylor, Rosegrant and Meyer (1986) outline four different types of communication.

- 1) intrapersonal communication
- 2) interpersonal communication
- 3) public communication
- 4) mass communication

Each type is suited to a different situation.

Intrapersonal Communication

Intrapersonal communication is communication within the individual through the processes of thinking and feeling. It enables people to communicate with themselves. This style of communication

creates a person's self - concept and processes information. By taking the time to think, plan and interpret ideas and messages, individuals learn more about self, others and the situation because they have the time to absorb new ideas and plan actions.

Interpersonal Communication

Interpersonal communication involves interaction between two people on a one - to - one basis or in small groups. In this style of communication you communicate with at least one other person. Staff instructions, briefings, feedback and customer relations are examples of this style. Maes, Weldy and Icenogle (1997) suggest that for graduates entering the workforce the top three competencies are oral communication, problem solving and self - motivation. These graduates will use oral skills most often when following instructions, listening, conversing and giving feedback.

Public Communication

Public communication originates from one source and takes place when the organization communicates with a number of receivers. This communication can be either to receivers within the organization—for example, the staff newsletter—or to others outside the organization in the form of reports or meetings. Williams (1996) identifies the need for people to think critically and understand their audiences when using persuasion techniques in both internal and external communication in business settings. The three forms of communication—verbal, nonverbal and graphic—are all used by those who have responsibility for communicating effectively